

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 SEOUL 02519 281554Z
ACTION NODS-00

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S E C R E T SEOUL 2519

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV US KS
SUBJ: KIM DONG-JO AND CONGRESSIONAL DEMANDS: AMBASSADOR'S DISCUSSION
WITH FOREIGN MINISTER

1. FOLLOWING DISCUSSION ON ANOTHER MATTER AFTERNOON MARCH 28, THE FOREIGN MINISTER RAISED WITH ME A REPORT APPEARING IN THE "CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR" THAT A GROUP OF CONGRESSMEN WERE CONSIDERING ADDRESSING A LETTER TO PRESIDENT PARK REGARDING ACCESS BY THE CONGRESS TO FORMER AMBASSADOR KIM DONG-JO. FOREIGN MINISTER SAID THAT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION WAS BEING GIVEN WITHIN THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT TO MODALITIES FOR SATISFYING CONGRESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS CONSISTENT WITH KOREAN SOVEREIGNTY AND INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE. HE STATED, HOWEVER, THAT A LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT FROM U.S. CONGRESSMEN OR THREATS TO CUT OFF AID WOULD HAVE A MOST ADVERSE EFFECT UPON EFFORTS NOW UNDERWAY. HE URGED THAT I MAKE THIS FACT KNOWN TO WASHINGTON IN THE HOPE THAT AN EXPLANATION COULD BE MADE TO THE CONCERNED CONGRESSMEN THAT THEIR ACTION MIGHT WELL HAVE AN EFFECT EXACTLY OPPOSITE TO THAT HOPED FOR.

2. I EXPLAINED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER THAT THE ACTIONS OF CONGRESS WERE OF COURSE INDEPENDENT OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH. HOWEVER, I UNDERTOOK TO REPORT HIS CONCERNS TO WASHINGTON AND TO EMPHASIZE HIS STRONG BELIEF THAT A
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CONGRESSIONAL LETTER AT THIS TIME WOULD BE MOST DAMAGING. I URGED AT THE SAME TIME THAT AMBASSADOR KIM, FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO WASHINGTON, CONTINUE HIS PRIVATE DIALOGUES WITH MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS IN ORDER TO ATTEMPT AN ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION.

3. THE FOREIGN MINISTER STATED THAT HIS CONCERN WENT

WELL BEYOND THE KIM MATTER AND FOCUSSED ON THE LONG TERM
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN KOREAN AND THE U.S.
HE AGAIN SAID, AS HE HAS IN THE PAST, THAT IF, FOR EXAMPLE,
THREATS TO THE COMPENSATION PACKAGE WERE TO BE SEEN AS PERHAPS
DAMAGING THE LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP, THEN THERE WERE
THOSE WHO WOULD ARGUE THAT THE AMOUNT INVOLVED WAS NOT
SUFFICIENT TO JUSTIFY A RUPTURE. I ASSURED THE FOREIGN
MINISTER THAT I CONTINUE TO VIEW THE TRENDS IN OUR
RELATIONSHIP AS SOUND AND WAS CONFIDENT THAT WITH
A DEGREE OF COOPERATION ON BOTH SIDES WE WOULD COME
THROUGH OUR CURRENT DIFFICULTIES IN GOOD ORDER.
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